[117 cont.] Strips of
283 rattan serve for lashings (8), or, for finer work, plaited or twisted

8. Dalrymple, pp. 89, 193.

rope and strings of coconut and other plant fibers (Fig. 47, Nos. 1 and 2). The twisting of the string is done on the upper thigh
413 with the ball of the right thumb (9). As a special tool, probably

9. Joest, Tagebuch, p. 86.

used in preparing [118] [Fig. 46 appears here] atap for roof
[237] coverings, the needles of pigs' ribs must be mentioned (Fig. 47,
396 No. 3) (1). Boat-building, as everywhere in Polynesia, is a craft
461

1. Edge-Partington, III, 65, No. 3. Berlin VI 16002. It is not wholly improbable that the needles are used for the embroidery of the plaited bags; cf. pp. 101 f.

that is particularly respected. In Vanikoro a chief was a famous boat-builder -- Gaimard, however, also gives evidence that the boat-builders had no perseverance and very often rested (2) --

2. Cf. p. 81. Gaimard in D'Urville, p. 334.

396 and on Ndeni the craft was hereditary in certain families. By
[428] washing the hand of his son with water, the artist transmits his skill to his heir before his death. The completion of a boat is therefore connected with certain formalities, for example the builder must row the new boat out to sea and then let it be tossed
[284] about on the breakers so that the spirit of the place where the tree was felled is driven away. He also believes that this will keep evil influences away from the ax that was used for the work (3).

3. O'Ferrall in J.A.I., XXXIV, p. 225.

[130 cont.] Gaimard lists quite a number of persons
622 [565] in each settlement, besides the actual village chief, who belong to the rank of chief. The chiefs -- it is not noted whether all of them or only the village chiefs, probably all, in view of what will presently be said about taboos -- enjoy religious respect, are the mediators with the atua. Dillon ascribes special religious standing to Moembe, the chief of Maneve. The chiefs of the [565] entire group constituted a closed corporation, which did not take part in the quarrels of their subjects. Their esteem [131] ex- [628] tended also to the inhabitants of neighboring villages to such an extent that they induced people who were at war with each other to separate and were able to bring about the return of prisoners. [576] One village had a female chief (1). A sign of esteem is hand-

1. Dillon, pp. 153, 177, 193 f., 232, 266 (according to p. 177, the [554] wife and daughter of a chief not only wore the bark belt, but also the breast disk of the men, but no ornaments in their short hair). D'Urville, pp. 135, 149, 172 f., 176, 183, etc. Quoy, ibid., p. 317. Sainson, ibid., p. [212] 356 (he maintains that only the chiefs may eat pigs). Gaimard, ibid., pp. 323 ff., 327 f., 347 f.

[576] kissing, that is to say, probably the touching of the back of the hand with the nose (2).

2. D'Urville, pp. 175, 188.

622 • 784 [264] One of the principal functions of chiefdom in Polynesia is the taboo. On Vanikoro, refuse from the meals of a chief is taboo, wholly in the Polynesian manner, and is therefore tossed into the sea. On the other hand, only chiefs are not affected by the taboo that lies on any kind of object; for instance, they may enter tabooed areas without taking special precautions,

[131 cont.]
672
784 whereas ordinary people must first remove all their clothing (3).

3. Gaimard in D'Urville, pp. 335, 346. Cf. also Sainson, ibid., p. 356, and Lesson, Revue d'Anthropologie, V, p. 269. Also in F. de Tolna, pp. 273 ff., the tabooed corner marked off by a liana in the "chiefs' houses."

784 There is evidence that the institution also exists on Ndeni, and when it is said that not everyone possesses the taboo (4), the

4. In contrast to Joest in Baessler, p. 388, who, however, goes on to say that usually the old people did it together on the village dance area.

[888]

possessor of which, however, is not called meduka, "sorcerer,"
[178] it follows that the exercise of the taboo is probably just one of the privileges remaining from the vanishing chiefdom. The taboo is pronounced in exactly the same way as elsewhere. The one who possesses the taboo cuts twigs from four to six different trees and covers them with an object called ngeklo, which is not more specifically described, full of malete (5). With this pile

5. Cf. p. 144 below.

of twigs he covers four twigs of another tree and puts the whole pile beside the object to be tabooed. No one would dare to touch a tabooed object or to take from a tabooed coconut palm, for example, so much as a dried leaf for a torch. The punish-
[761] ment would be a weakness in the legs or even death (6).

6. O'Ferrall in J.A.I., XXXIV, p. 225.